

从读者反应论角度分析超文本小说的阅读与写作

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从读者反应论角度分析超文本小说的阅读  
与写作

The Reading and Writing of Hypertext Fictions: An Analysis  
from the Perspective of the Reader-Response Theory

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## Abstract

Since hypertext fiction made its first appearance in the 1990s, volumes of studies have been devoted to it. Disputes and discussions have been launched concerning its definition and features such as interactivity, nonlinearity and intertextuality. Issues concerning its form, writing skills as well as reading experience have always been the focus of research. However, in the domain of hypertext fiction, there are still blanks to be filled in. Hypertext study in China still remains at an entry level. Since hypertext fiction has a short history of merely twenty-odd years, issues concerning hypertext fiction are seldom touched on by scholars in China, and very few papers and monographs are devoted to hypertext fiction.

Due to the scarcity of hypertext studies, the thesis hence is a venture into the features of hypertext fiction and the differences between hypertext and traditional text by using reader-response theory, with an aim to tackle the disputes about “the end of books.” The thesis introduces and analyzes the features of hypertext fiction and the experience of reading it comprehensively, carefully and profoundly, with case studies of three most famous and typical hypertext fictions: *Afternoon, A Story* by Michael Joyce, *Secret Garden* by Stuart Moulthrop and *Patchwork Girl* by Shelley Jackson. As classic works of hypertext fiction, the three fictions bear distinct features of interactivity, nonlinearity and intertextuality, which reconfigure the reader-author relation and require readers to become active participants.

The emergence and development of electronic literature triggers the disputes concerning “the end of books”. The disputes mainly focus on issues about whether hypertext fiction will cause a literary revolution and whether it will become the “terminator” of print literature or not. This thesis attempts to analyze both advantages and disadvantages of hypertext fiction and points out the possibility that the reading habit and the nonlinear thinking pattern cultivated during hyper-reading can be used in reading and analyzing the print literature. The utilitarian purpose of hypertext



fiction may diminish its literary aesthetics and hinder its development, so that hypertext fiction can only be a supplement to print literature.

**Key Words:** hypertext; hypertext fiction; reader-response theory

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## 摘要

超文本小说诞生于二十世纪九十年代，此后吸引了众多学者的研究。无论是超文本小说的定义还是其自身具有的互动性、非线性和互文性等特点，都引发了学术界的争议和讨论。超文本小说表现形式、写作技巧与阅读体验一直是超文本小说研究的焦点。目前，国内对于超文本小说的研究处于起步阶段，在超文本小说的研究领域中仍旧存在着空白地带。作为近二十几年出现的新兴文学体裁，国内文学评论界对于超文本小说的认识尚浅，专注于超文本小说的论文或书籍更是屈指可数。

鉴于此，本论文尝试从读者反应论这一角度入手，细致探讨超文本小说的特点以及超文本与传统文本的差异，从而进一步探究“书籍终结”之争。为全面、细致、深入地介绍和分析超文本小说的特点和阅读体验，本论文特选取三部经典超文本小说进行研究，分别为：迈克·乔伊斯的《下午，一个故事》，斯图尔特·莫斯洛浦的《胜利花园》和雪莱·杰克逊的《拼缀女孩》。作为超文本小说中的经典作品，这三部小说充分体现了超文本小说的互动性、非线性和互文性特征。超文本小说的三大特点重塑了作者-读者关系，增加了小说的阅读难度，从而对超文本阅读者提出了更高的要求。阅读成为大脑主动选择和主动学习的过程。因此，超文本小说的读者不再是被动的接受者，而成为主动的参与者。

电子文学的出现和繁荣引发了“书籍终结”之争。超文本小说是否会引起一场文学革命，以及是否会成为纸质文本的终结者，都成为争论的焦点。虽然超文本小说的某些特征是纸质文学作品难以具备的，但超文本小说在文学美学方面的不足决定其无法替代纸质文学作品，而是作为其补充形式并行发展。

**关键词：**超文本 超文本小说 读者反应论



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## Chapter One Introduction

### 1.1 Literature Review

#### 1.1.1 Hypertext: An Introduction

##### 1.1.1.1 History of Hypertext

Before the term hypertext was coined, the idea of hypertext had been foreseen by many scholars, such as J. L. Borges, Vannevar Bush and Roland Barthes. Although the idea is closely related to literary theories, the development of hypertext can never be severed from the development of information technologies<sup>1</sup>. According to Huang Mingfen, there are three stages in the history of information technologies: the emergence and development of oral communication; the emergence and development of written communication characterized by written language and printing; and the emergence and development of electronic communication featured by electromagnetic wave and computer science (18). When people talk to each other, information exchanged during oral communication leaves marks in both speakers' and listeners' minds and creates psychological texts. Dialogues can be seen as psychological hypertexts, which are interactive, intertextual and dynamic, because speakers can make adjustments, such as ones in intonation, volume and content, according to listeners' responses.

The second stage in the history of the information technology is the development of written communication, which has strengthened the position of linear texts. However, some of the written communication retains hypertextuality, such as footnotes and endnotes inserted in texts. One of the great works with hypertextuality in Chinese history is *I Chiang*, or *The Book of Changes*, which is made up of sixty-four symbols, explaining divinatory symbols from the Eight Diagrams. The entry point is chosen by readers themselves but not the writer, and the route or

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<sup>1</sup> On the issues related to the history of hypertext, see Huang Mingfen 136-223; on the issues related to hypertext and information technology, see Huang Mingfen 19-74.



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